

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMCONSUL BELFAST

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 820

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TAGS: PINT, U.K. (N.I.)

SUBJECT: PROVISIONAL IRA CEASEFIRE WELCOMED.

1. ALL NEWS AGENCIES CARRIED PROVISIONAL IRA STATEMENT
ORIGINATING DUBLIN EVENING FEB. 9 TO EFFECT "IN LIGHT
DISCUSSIONS WHICH HAVE TAKEN PLACE BETWEEN REPRESENTATIVES
OF THE REPUBLICAN MOVEMENT AND BRITISH OFFICIALS ON EFFECTIVE
ARRANGEMENTS TO ENSURE THAT THERE IS NO BREAKDOWN OF A NEW TRUCE
THE ARMY COUNCIL OF THE IRA HAVE RENEWED THEIR ORDER SUSPENDING
OFFENSIVE MILITARY ACTION. HOSTILITIES AGAINST CROWN FORCES WILL
BE SUSPENDED FROM SIX P.M. ON FEBRUARY 10, 1975". STATEMENT HAS
RECEIVED GUARDED WELCOME NORTHERN IRELAND. NEWS RECEIVED HERE
ABOUT 2100 FEB. 9 AND CONSENSUS EARLY REACTIONS HOPEFUL AND
CAUTIOUS. NOBODY CONDEMNING PEACE OR YET RENEWING CALLS FOR
EITHER IRA PEACE WITH JUSTICE OR LOYALIST PEACE WITH VICTORY.
VANGUARD AND OFFICIAL UNIONISTS SKEPTICAL OF IRA MOTIVES AND
CONCERNED ABOUT NATURE ANY AGREEMENTS BETWEEN NORTHERN IRELAND
OFFICE AND PROVISIONALS. MOST NEWS ANALYSTS FIND ENCOURAGEMENT
IN FACTS THAT IRA SETS NEITHER TIME LIMIT NOR CONDITIONS ON
CASEFIRE. NEW PRAISE FOR SECSTATE REES HAS COME FROM SEVERAL
MODERATES.

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2. IN CONGEN VIEW NEW CEASEFIRE ANNOUNCEMENT CAME NOT RPT NOT

ONE MOMENT TOO SOON IF FRAGILE RAPPROCHEMENT BETWEEN COMMUNITIES TO BE MAINTAINED. THREE ROMAN CATHOLICS KILLED BELFAST OVER WEEKEND IN WHAT APPEARS BE RETURN SECTARIAN ASSASSINATIONS. ONE MAN SHOT IN DOORWAY HOME SATURDAY EVENING AND TWO YOUNG MEN GUNNED DOWN AS THEY LEAVING EVENING MASS FEB. 9 AT CHURCH PROSPEROUS MALONE ROAD AREA.

3. RESTIVENESS MAIN LOYALIST PARAMILITARY GROUPS DEMONSTRATED BY NEW MILITANCY IN CONFRONTING POLITICIANS IN UNITED ULSTER UNIONIST COALITION FEB. 7 WITH DEMANDS BE INCLUDED IN STEERING COMMITTEE FOR SELECTION CONVENTION CANDIDATES. KEN GIBSON OF ULSTER VOLUNTEER FORCE AND VOLUNTEER POLITICAL PARTY FEB 8 THREATENED GENERAL STRIKE TO PARALYSE ULSTER AS FIRST STEP IN SETTING UP "PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT" IN NORTHERN IRELAND IF DEMANDS NOT RPT NOT MET. ULSTER DEFENSE ASSOCIATION AND ULSTER VOLUNTEER FORCE HAVE SEEN THEIR POPULAR SUPPORT DWINDLE ALONG WITH FADING OF THEIR MAIN REASON FOR EXISTENCE. PROTRANED LOYALIST CEASEFIRE AND RECENT IRA CEASEFIRE HAVE CREATED SITUATION WHERE PROTESTANT PUBLIC INCREASINGLY VOCAL IN QUESTIONING DISCIPLINARY BRUTALITY AND EXTORTION METHODS OF PARAMILITARY IN PROTESTANT AREAS. NEW PROVISIONAL CEASEFIRE IN REMOVING OBVIOUS "THREAT" MAY HAVE COME JUST IM TIME PREVENT SERIOUS PARAMILITARY ERUPTION.

4. ONE INTERESTING FOOTNOTE TO CEASEFIRE ANNOUNCEMENT IS APPARENT SINN FEIN SURPRISE. SEAMUS LOUGHRAN WHO ONE OF PRINCIPAL PARTICIPANTS IN TALKS WITH GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS BEFORE HIS RECENT TRIP TO UNITED STATES STATED RADIO INTERVIEW FEB. 10 THAT HE NOT RPT NOT AWARE PROVISIONAL ARMY COUNCIL INTENDED DECLARE CEASEFIRE. HE SPECULATED DECISION HAD COME AS RESULT SATISFACTION PROVISIONAL COUNCIL WITH ESTABLISHMENT COMMUNICATIONS INTENDED PRESERVE CEASEFIRE AND HE EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE PROVISIONAL ARMY DISCIPLINE WOULD PREVAIL TO HALT FIGHTING IN ALL AREAS HOSTILITIES.SPICER

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